

REMARKS

Claims 10-11, 13-16 and 21 are pending, and claims 11 and 21 are withdrawn from consideration.

In the aforesaid Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 10 and 13-16 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zamore (6,596,818) in view of Avellanet (5,733,496), stating that Zamore discloses a balloon catheter comprising all the limitations recited in claims 10 and 13-16 with the exception of a catheter that is selectively crosslinked by having non-crosslinked portions, and radially spaced longitudinally extending stiffening zones of crosslinked material, and Avellanet teaches the use of a catheter having varied stiffness along its longitudinal axis for creating a polymer tubular member having improved stiffness characteristics.

However, Avellanet does not disclose or suggest radially spaced stiffening zones as required by claim 10 (i.e., spaced around the circumference of the balloon; see, for example, zones 14 in Fig. 3 of Applicant's specification). Specifically, Avellanet discloses a catheter with longitudinally spaced stiffening zones (i.e., a catheter with varied stiffness along, not around, its longitudinal axis). Therefore, the combination of Zamore in view of Avellanet at most teaches a balloon with varied stiffness along its length caused by the longitudinally spaced zones which were irradiated differently or which have different material compositions as taught by Avellanet.

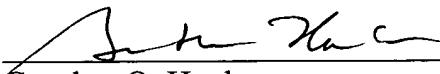
Response dated September 21, 2004  
In Reply to Office Action of July 26, 2004

In light of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and  
that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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